

REMARKS

The Office Action dated January 11, 2006 has been reviewed and carefully considered. Claims 5 and 21 are redrafted into independent form, without further revision. Claims 4, 6-11 and 22 are canceled without prejudice. Claims 5 and 13-21 are pending, the independent claims being 5, 13, 18 and 21. No other claim amendments are made. Reconsideration of the above-identified application, as amended and in view of the following remarks, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 4-11, 13, 15-18, 20 and 22 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,034,737 to Koyama et al. ("Koyama").

Claim 5, now redrafted into independent form, recites, "... said control and switching means is coupled to said display driver and is further operable to selectively disable video signal on said display screen."

Koyama fails to disclose or suggest this aspect of claim 5.

The Office Action cites to the 16 paragraphs between col. 4, line 5 and col. 5, line 67 in Koyama.

The instant applicants are unable to find anything in this "passage" that would support any proposition contrary to Koyama failing to disclose or suggest this aspect of claim 5.

For at least this reason, claim 5 is deemed to distinguish patentably over Koyama.

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Claim 13 recites, "... control and switching means operable to . . . remove volume level from user control while connection is to said input."

Koyama fails to disclose or suggest this aspect of claim 13.

Koyama discloses a remote control transmitter 47 for controlling volume of all of the speakers connected to the television receiver, surround sound or otherwise (col. 4, lines 24-37; col. 5, lines 66-67; col. 6, lines 50-58). Also, by use of the remote control transmitter, the Koyama user is also able to select from among three audio sources (FIG. 3, ref. no. 43, k, l, m, n).

The Office Action cites, once again, to the 16 paragraphs between col. 4, line 5 and col. 5, line 67 in Koyama.

The Office Action seemingly suggests that setting Koyama switch 25 to fixed contact e removes volume level from user control.

The instant applicants find no support in Koyama for this proposition by the Office Action (col. 4, lines 24-37; col. 5, lines 66-67; col. 6, lines 50-58).

It is unclear in what sense the Office Action regards Koyama as disclosing the removing of volume level from user control. In particular, Koyama fails to disclose or suggest, "... control and switching means operable to ... remove volume level from user control while connection is to said input."

For at least the above reasons, the rejection of claim 13 cannot be sustained.

Claim 18 is a method claim corresponding to device claim 13, and is likewise deemed to distinguish patentably over Koyama.

Claims 14, 19 and 21 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as unpatentable over Koyama in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,646,699 to Oh et al. ("Oh").

Claim 14 depends from claim 13, and Oh cannot make up for the shortcomings of Koyama.

As mentioned above, claim 13 recites, "... control and switching means operable to . . . remove volume level from user control while connection is to said input."

Oh discloses a remote controller 27 operable by the user for controlling audio volume in a television receiver. By use of the remote controller 27, the user controls the volume of a signal subjected to surround processing and then fed to all of the speakers connected to a television receiver. For surround processing, the signal flow proceeds from controller 27 to remote control signal receiver 86, to microprocessor 84, to outputs X5 and X6. In addition, the receiver 86 sends a signal to decoder 124 which has an output A2. The X6 control selects between two audio signals of potentially different volume levels. The volume of the resulting surround sound output signal from the surround processor is therefore potentially controllable by the user merely by selecting between the two audio signals, and also controllable otherwise by the user's use of the remote control (col. 3, lines 2-4; col. 4, lines 52-56).

The Koyama remote control transmitter 47 sends a signal received by the light receiving element 46. The microcomputer 45 is thereby controlled by the user to raise or lower audio volume, by means of the audio processing circuit 44 (col. 4, line 28).

It is unclear how, and by what motivation, the Office Action proposes to modify Koyama, in view of Oh, to resemble claim 13, or its dependent claim 14.

For at least the above reasons, claim 14 distinguishes patentably over the applied references.

Claim 19 depends from claim 18, which is deemed to be patentable over the applied references by at least the same reasoning set forth above with regard to claim 14, and is likewise deemed to be patentable.

Claim 21 recites, "... the bypassing operation affords user control of volume levels of said respective audio channels, whereas said control and switching means sets volume for said center audio channel to a predetermined fixed level under said surround sound operation."

The applied references, alone or in combination, fail to disclose or suggest this aspect of claim 21, for at least the reasons set forth above with regard to claim 13.

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

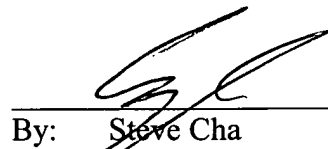
A check for \$200.00 is enclosed in payment of the fee for adding one, additional independent claim in excess of three total.

For all the foregoing reasons, it is respectfully submitted that all the present claims are patentable in view of the cited references. A Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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